



**Joint Meeting of the
Commissioner's Task Force to Develop a Performance-Based School
Accountability System
and the NH DOE Accountability Task Force
March 14, 2011, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, Room 100 (Walker Building)
NOTES**

Next Meeting: Friday, May 20, 2011, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, location TBD

ATTENDING:

X	Virginia Barry, Ph.D.	Commissioner of Education
X	Brian Cochrane	Director of Assessment and Accountability Nashua School District
	Paul Couture	Principal, Stevens High School, Claremont
X	Jerome Frew	Superintendent, Kearsarge Regional School District
	Molly Kelly	Former Chair, Education Committee, NH Senate
	Daphne Kenyon	NH State Board of Education
X	Paul Leather	Deputy Commissioner, NH Department of Education
X	Scott Marion	National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Dover
X	Judith Fillion	Director, Division of Program Support, NH Department of Education
X	Edward Murdough	Bureau of School Approval, NH Department of Education
	Kathleen Murphy	Director, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education
X	Emma Rous	Former Chair, Education Committee, NH House of Representatives
X	Vincent Spiotti	Bethlehem School Board, Bethlehem, NH
X	Franklin Gould	NH House of Representatives, Lebanon, NH
X	Deborah Wiswell	Bureau of Accountability, Curriculum and School Improvement, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education

Accountability (AYP) Task Force (in addition to those on the Commissioner's Task Force)
District Representatives: Donna Crook (MSD); Kathy Stavenger (SNHU); Helene Bickford; Steve Zdravec (Portsmouth); Heather Cummings (Gov Wentworth); Chris Demers (Concord)

NH DOE: Merry Fortier, Mary Lane, Sallie Fellows, Marcia McCaffery, Steve Bos, Tim Kurtz

NH DOE Consultants: Karen Laba; Keith Burke

Center for Assessment: Scott Marion

Measured Progress: Shannan Douglas

Meeting Objectives:

- ◆ Report on SB172 hearing and status of HB 39
- ◆ Examine the distribution of state-wide data and discuss designation of "adequate"
- ◆ Review revised sample report and school examples
- ◆ Gather recommendations for dissemination

NOTES

1. Welcome and Review of the Agenda:

Deb opened the meeting describing the work that has been done since last meeting to address the recommendations for the reports and for ways to include ELs (English learners) academic data in the performance system.

Deb alerted members of the task force that there will be no meeting in April to allow time to run the newest (fall 2010) NECAP data. The next joint meeting will be **TBD**

Deb invited general comments from members on the process to date.

2. Legislative Report: SB 172, HB 39. .

Deb distributed copies of the revised SB 172 on the adequacy accountability system. Changes to the original language of the bill include adding "locally defined criteria and data" to the system. The revised bill as presented to the legislature omits discussion of the few K-2 schools and any others without NECAP data with respect to a requirement to they use locally defined data ("level II" performance).

On February 22, Senator Molly Kelly presented SB 172 to the Senate Education Subcommittee. Deb Wiswell appeared before the committee and described the work of the Task Force in developing the performance based accountability system and responded to their questions. The bill was approved by the committee and sent to the full Senate and was passed.

HB 39, which proposes to remove all but reading and math from the list of "adequacy indicators" has been sent to the full House for action.

Discussion:

--Former House Education Chair Emma Rous reminded the Task Force of a bill under review to allow NEASC as a measure of accountability.

-- Merry Fortier mentioned that HB 337 establishes a new task force on accountability. While this bill is primarily a budget item, the additional language about an accountability task force could result in confusion. The Task Force will need to monitor the path of this bill and consider how it might change the work of this group. The Commissioner indicated Mike Schwartz of the Department has met with the sponsor of HB 337 to confirm the information being used in deliberations about this bill.

Deb reiterated her view that the information this committee has developed, the performance reports, etc., is good information for districts and schools. She urged the committee to continue this work regardless of changes in adequacy funding or legislative oversight because the products (reports) provide valuable insight into student achievement and school performance.

3. State Task Force on English Learners – Tim Kurtz, NH DOE Assessment. .

Deb asked Tim Kurtz to report on the discussions at the statewide ELs Task Force. Tim described the committee's focus on the primary question: when are a student's language skills sufficient to accept NECAP scores as a valid measure of their content knowledge?

The EL Task Force consulted with Dr. Gary Cook from the University of Wisconsin, ELL specialist, who advised using the composite ACCESS score. ACCESS for ELLS is an assessment that measures progress toward English language proficiency. In ACCESS, scores of 1-5 are below proficient in English and a score of 6 indicates proficient in English.

Tim described the discussion and analysis by the Task Force of current ACCESS and NECAP data to develop a recommendation for what ACCESS score would lead one to believe that the NECAP score is a valid measure of the student's content knowledge.

Some recommendations include:

- once a student qualifies based on whatever ACCESS score is decided "counts," their NECAP scores for the year following and all those after will be considered valid
- a desirable goal is to identify a single cut point on ACCESS for all grade levels and content areas.

Paul Leather mentioned that Task Force members were asked to take the discussion back to their districts.

4. Distribution of Adequacy Scores Statewide .-- Scott Marion

- High school score distribution, possible adequacy' score`
- ES/MS distributions, possible adequacy' score:

Scott Marion (Center for Assessment) and Deb explained the challenges in selecting and assuring the correct data is used for the reports being prepared to determine "adequacy" scores. Differences in the statewide summaries presented at the previous meetings and the set of data being presented this morning are the result of having data available for both testing year and teaching year. Scott, Deb, and Dept. data staff are working to coordinate so that the school profile, NECAP results, "n" (number of students in each tested group); participation rates, graduation and dropout rates all use data from the same year or the most recent year with the report indicating the source of information.

Scott revised the data sets and the results revealed little difference in the mean (2.87) across all Elementary / Middle schools. The new data run yields 11 schools earning a score of less than 2 (3%). Scott proposed setting a standard of 2.0 for adequacy.

In the high school group, the data presented in previous meetings yielded a mean of 2.4. The revised analysis resulted in a minor change to a mean of 2.33. If a value of 2.0 is used

to indicate "adequacy, 19 schools fall below 2.0, which is 22.4% of the total number of high schools. In addition, there are 5 high schools at 2.0.

Discussion –

- Q: Is there an expectation that there will be the same "cut point" for adequacy for both high school and elementary/middle?
A – That would be preferable. There are adjustments that can be made to the weighting of the values to accommodate the natural differences in the amount and kinds of data available for elementary/middle schools versus high schools.
- Q: Since high school have only one set of data from one test and one group of students, and elementary/ middle schools have many grades/ groups/ cohorts included, does it make sense to use the same standard? Could the system use multiple years of data rather than just the one?
A. Some states use multiple years, like a three year average. It gets complicated but not impossible.

Graduation Rate Discussion (cont'd.) Scott revisited the question about 4 or 5 year graduation rate, asking the desires of the group.

A recommendation was proposed and general agreement was indicated to report BOTH 4 and 5 year cohort graduation rates, each weighted 1. Change dropout weighting to 1.

**Sample Actual High School Reports:* To give committee members examples of the range of information included in the adequacy reports, Deb distributed reports for Lebanon High School and Berlin High School using 2009 data.

Discussion:

- Scott pointed attention to the contribution of the various indicators to the overall adequacy score.
- concerns were expressed about the 2X weighting of graduation and dropout rates; weighting this much exerts a strong influence on the final score
- a suggestion was made to use the 5 year cohort graduation rate when available
- one option might be to allow schools to use their 5 year cohort rate in appealing their adequacy score

- *Sample Actual K-3 Elementary Report:* Deb distributed a report sample for a K-3 elementary school. The Task Force has previously discussed the challenge of finding sufficient data for schools serving early elementary grades. Some points to examine:
- Deb reminded the committee that K-3 schools are credited with the scores for 4th graders in the NH system by using "teaching year" data; the academic performance of students who were *taught* in a K-3 school but *tested* in the fall of their 4th grade year are considered the responsibility of the teaching school, the K-3 school.
 - K-2 schools would have 3rd grade scores for similar reasons, but would not have growth results because growth percentile requires 2 years of data; 3rd graders have only one year
 - on the Carpenter example, the N for reading and math includes both 3rd and 4th graders
 - however, the N for participation includes only 3rd graders

- there is an error in the Student Growth scores on this example because the original data used "testing year" rather than "teaching year" data; this is one of the corrections that will be made before the May meeting

5. Revised Sample Performance Based Reports: Deb Wiswell

Deb distributed samples of revised high school and elementary sample reports using the recommended changes to the layout. The challenge for elementary/ middle school reports is that there is too much information to explain/ define the indicators and the point allocation alongside the actual data to fit on one side of a sheet. The high school layout would work on two sides. A suggestion was offered to use the original layout, with the data on one page and the definitions, explanations on another, and to be consistent between es/ ms and high school.

6. Dissemination Plans: Deb Wiswell , Karen Laba

Deb distributed copies of the *NH Accountability System Handbook* Table of Contents and Glossary. The grayed out sections of the contents are partially completed. The Glossary is included and members of both Task Forces are asked to review once again for accuracy.

At the January meeting, a copy of the "Frequently Asked Questions" list was distributed. If members have recommendations for additions to the FAQs sections, please forward them to Karen or Deb.

Discussion:

- suggested FAQ – explain why a difference in graduation rates among schools might be related to the number of credits the school requires for graduation; the state minimum is 20 credits, but some jurisdictions require up to 28 credits.

Dissemination Presentations: Deb is scheduled to present at the principal's conference in June. She suggested the committee will need to plan a webinar to disseminate information about the accountability system when it is officially launched. She would like to get on the agenda for the superintendent's conference. Deb is scheduled for a number of CIA meetings to present information on the common core but could add accountability information to those sessions. She invited committee members to suggest other means for disseminating information to the state.

7. Other Topics:

- a) Donna Crook asked, what about the schools that attain scores of 3.5+? Can they be recognized for excellence? In previous meetings, the idea was proposed that the accountability system could identify those schools that are outperforming others and recognize them for their work.

Deb indicated that this is still an option under review. Current efforts are focused on getting the required elements in place to comply with the legislation (and the changes that may be enacted this term).

- b) Deb shared an update on the input system: recently superintendents received notice of missing submissions, and since that notice many more are coming in. Questions are arising when DOE staff notice differences between what is indicated in the submission

and what is observed during site visits. Emma Rous suggested that, while a burden on Department staff, that was exactly what was anticipated, that site visits would be used to verify and confirm what was submitted to the system.

Ed Murdough mentioned a confusion in the timing of site visits and input submissions. As of now, the adequacy standards are due to be reviewed every 2 years, whereas the full set of school approval standards are due every 5 years. Ed suggested that it makes sense to have one system perhaps in two parts – the adequacy standards every 2 years and the full set of standards (including adequacy) every 4 years.

Ed pointed out another question that has arisen: some of the standards clearly are a district responsibility and the school has little or no control over. How can a district be held responsible for its contribution to school adequacy?

Next Steps

1. Complete a full run of the adequacy data using 2010 NECAP results.
2. Confirm consistent data sets for all information.
3. Revise example reports definitions and layout.
4. Confirm recommendations on ELs scores from the state ELs Task Force.
5. Continue developing Handbook components and presentation materials.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

Next meeting: now rescheduled for Friday, June 3, 12-3:30. Lunch and discussion.